

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ABF-01 /011 W
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P 090819Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3152

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 1302

PASS NEA/ARN FOR AMBASSADOR MURPHY

EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: ABUD, SY

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATIONAL FUNDS

1. EMBASSY'S REPRESENTATIONAL ALLOTMENT OF \$3,000 HAS BEEN SPENT, AND AMBASSADOR IS OUT-OF-POCKET \$412. EMBASSY REQUESTS ADDITIONAL REPRESENTATIONAL ALLOTMENT FOR REMAINDER FISCAL YEAR OF \$1,800. DISCUSSION FOLLOWS.

2. EMBASSY'S INITIAL REQUEST FOR \$6,220 IN FY 75 WAS REDUCED BY DEPARTMENT TO \$3,000, OR LESS THAN HALF OF REQUESTED AMOUNT. DESPITE OUR EFFORTS TO LIMIT REPRESENTATIONAL EXPENDITURES TO FIT WITHIN FUNDS AVAILABLE, WHICH HAVE INCLUDED ISSUANCE OF NEW REPRESENTATION GUIDELINES AND CAREFUL REVIEW OF VOUCHERS SUBMITTED, ALLOTMENT HAS PROVED CLEARLY INSUFFICIENT TO COVER EVEN MINIMUM REPRESENTATION AT THIS BUSY AND GROWING POST. AS BASIS FOR COMPARISON IT MAY BE NOTED THAT EMBASSY'S REPRESENTATIONAL ALLOTMENTS FOR FY 66 AND FY 67 WERE \$5,400 AND \$5,500 RESPECTIVELY. THESE AMOUNTS WOULD BE CONSIDERABLY HIGHER IN TERMS OF 1975 DOLLARS.

3. EMBASSY'S PRINCIPAL SUBSTANTIVE POSITIONS HAVE NOW BEEN FILLED AND OFFICERS ARE ATTEMPTING TO RE-ESTABLISH RANGE OF USEFUL CONTACTS WHICH EMBASSY ENJOYED PRIOR TO 1967 BREAK IN RELATIONS AND WHICH ARE ESSENTIAL TO RE-ESTABLISHING PROPER REPRESENTATION OF US INTERESTS IN SYRIA.

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4. WE DO NOT KNOW WHAT CONSIDERATION LED DEPT TO CUT POST'S INITIAL REQUEST SO DRASTICALLY OR WHETHER OTHER POSTS HAVE HAD TO UNDERGO SIMILAR SLASHES IN REPRESENTATIONAL ALLOTMENTS BECAUSE FEWER FUNDS ARE AVAILABLE. IN EMBASSY'S VIEW, HOWEVER, FUNCTIONS OF THIS NEWLY RE-ESTABLISHED MISSION ARE OF CONSIDERABLE IMPORTANCE TO USG AND DESERVE MORE ADEQUATE REPRESENTATIONAL SUPPORT. FOR THESE REASONS, REQUEST MINIMUM ADDITIONAL ALLOTMENT OF \$1,800 FOR REMAINDER THIS FISCAL YEAR.

PELLETREAU

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